

United States of America the two hundred and seventeenth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 3:14 p.m., May 26, 1993]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 28.

Exchange With Reporters After Signing the Older Americans Month Proclamation

May 25, 1993

White House Travel Office

Q. Mr. President, are you upset by this whole Travel Office mess? And who's responsible for it, sir?

The President. Well, ultimately, anything that happens in the White House is the responsibility of the President. And whenever you've asked me a question, I've told you all I knew about it. All I knew was there was a plan to cut the size of the office, save tax dollars, save the press money. I talked to Mr. McLarty about it this morning. I said, you know, I keep reading this; I know that there is a feeling at least, based on what I've read, that someone in the White House may have done something that was inappropriate or that wasn't quite handled right or something. Mack and I talked about it today. He said he would spend some real time on and look into it, try to ascertain exactly what happened, make a full report to me, which I think is the appropriate thing to do. I simply can't tell you that I know something I don't. I literally don't know anything other than what I've told you. He's looking into it now. He's worked on it quite a bit today. And he's going to make a report to me, and then we will take appropriate steps, including saying whatever's appropriate to you.

Q. Do you think that the White House approached the FBI improperly in this case?

The President. I don't have any reason to believe that. I mean, for example, there are lots of cases where, historically, as nearly as we can determine, the White House, if something happened within the White House, might ask the FBI to look into it. So I don't know that. I don't know that. And I don't have an opinion yet. I have to wait. Mack agreed that he needed to really make sure that he had all the facts down; he needed to know exactly what had happened; he needed to report to me. I said, "Look, this is just a simple case. Let's just follow the do-right rule here, make up your own mind, get the facts, see what you think happened, let me know, and we'll tell the public." I mean, there's nothing funny going on here. We really were just trying to save money for everybody. That was the only thing I was ever asked about personally. And I don't believe that anybody else had any other motives that I know about. And so I asked him to look into it. When we know more, we'll be glad to say more.

Q. What about Dole saying it has a tinge of Watergate?

The President. There's none of that because, you know, there's nothing like that going on. There's no—no.

Q. Don't you think——

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. We're on top of it. We'll——

Q. Don't you think a lot of people were hurt by the way it was handled?

The President. Well, the question is whether the people that were hurt did anything to merit it. We'll just have to see. I mean, I want to get a report, and then I will be glad to tell you whatever I know. But let me find out——

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. All those decisions have been made by Mack. We talked yesterday. We talked again this morning. He said, "Look, I just want to get on top of this. I'll tell you exactly what happened. I'll tell you what I think." So I'm waiting for a report. And I don't think I should say anything else until I know more.

NOTE: The exchange began at 5:43 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

**Executive Order 12849—
Implementation of Agreement With
the European Community on
Government Procurement**

May 25, 1993

Whereas, the United States and the European Community (EC) have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding on Government Procurement (Agreement) that provides appropriate reciprocal competitive government procurement opportunities;

Whereas, the commitments made in the Agreement are intended to become part of an expanded General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade Agreement on Government Procurement (GATT Code) and are an important step toward an expanded GATT Code;

Whereas, as a result of these commitments, U.S. businesses will obtain increased access to EC member state procurement for U.S. goods and services;

Whereas, I have determined that it is inconsistent with the public interest to apply the restrictions of the Buy American Act, as amended (41 U.S.C. 10a–10d), to procurement covered by the Agreement;

Now, Therefore, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, and title III of the Trade Agreements Act of 1979, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2511–2518), and in order to implement the Agreement, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. In applying the provisions of the Buy American Act, the heads of the agencies listed in Annex 1, Parts A and B, of this order are requested, as of the date of this order, to apply no price differential between articles, materials, or supplies of U.S. origin and those originating in the member states of the EC.

Sec. 2. For purposes of this order, the rule of origin specified in section 308 of the Trade

Agreements Act of 1979, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2518), shall apply in determining whether goods originate in the member states of the EC.

Sec. 3. This order shall apply only to solicitations, issued by agencies listed in Annex 1, Parts A and B, of this order, above the threshold amounts set forth in Annex 2.

Sec. 4. This order shall apply to solicitations outstanding on the date of this order, except for those for which the initial deadline for receipt of bids or proposals has passed, and to all solicitations issued after the date of this order.

Sec. 5. Except for procurements by the Department of Defense, the United States Trade Representative (USTR) shall be responsible for interpretation of the Agreement. The USTR shall seek the advice of the interagency organization established under section 242(a) of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 (19 U.S.C. 1872(a)) and consult with affected agencies, including the Office of Federal Procurement Policy.

Sec. 6. This Executive order is effective immediately. Although regulatory implementation of this order must await revisions to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), it is expected that agencies listed in Annex 1, Parts A and B, of this order will take all appropriate actions in the interim to implement those aspects of the order that are not dependent upon regulatory revision.

Sec. 7. Pursuant to section 25 of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act, as amended (41 U.S.C. 421(a)), the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council shall ensure that the policies established herein are incorporated in the FAR within 30 days from the date this order is issued.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
May 25, 1993.

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